

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Further to the requests made in the responses dated October 7, 2004; November 12, 2003; and January 12, 2004, Applicants again respectfully request that a copy of an initialed PTO-1449 (corresponding to the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on August 25, 1999) be forwarded with the next USPTO communication.

Claims 1-23 were objected to because "principal" is allegedly "unclear and confusing". However, Applicants believe "principal" is used correctly in the claims and reconsideration of this objection is respectfully requested.¹

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claim 1 has been amended to address the issues raised in the office action regarding "additional language". Consequently, withdrawal of the Section 112, second paragraph, rejection of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 7 and 9 contain allowable subject matter.² Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 7 and the intervening claims 2, 4 and 6 and claim 8 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9. Certain amendments have been made to even better conform the language of the dependent claims with the language of the independent claims into which they have been incorporated. As such, these claims are now believed to be allowable. Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 1 and claims 10, 19 and 20 depend from claim 8. These claims are likewise believed to be allowable. Based

¹ See, e.g., American Heritage Dictionary:

Principal and *principle* are often confused but have no meanings in common. *Principle* is only a noun and usually refers to a rule or standard. *Principal* is both a noun and an adjective. As a noun, it has specialized meanings in law and finance, but in general usage it refers to a person who holds a high position or plays an important role: *a meeting among all the principals in the transaction*. As an adjective it has the sense of "chief" or "leading": *The coach's principal concern is the quarterback's health*. (Emphasis in original).

² Based on a telephone conference with Examiner Phan, Applicants understand that the discussion of claim 7 on page 13 of the office action is erroneous.

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on the discussion of allowable subject matter on page 13 of the office action, claim 11 has been amended to incorporate subject matter that is believed to be allowable. Claims 13, 14, 16, 21 and 22 depend from claim 11 and are likewise believed to be allowable. Claims 2-7, 9, 12, 15 and 23 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Because these amendments are believed to place this application in condition for allowance, entry is believed to be appropriate and is respectfully requested.

While not acquiescing in the rejection of claims 1-6, 8 and 10-23 under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" over Cistulli (U.S. Patent No. 5,946,376) in view of Sanpei *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,732,349), this rejection is believed to be moot in view the above amendments.

Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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